

What should I do when my child will not take care of their belongings?

Establish rules for taking care of belongings and returning items to their proper places after using them. These rules should be consistent and followed by everyone in the home. Talk about the rules often and reward your child for following the rules. Possible rewards include verbal praise or having a friend over to play.

Consider your child's age before expecting them to take care of their belongings themselves. Show your child how to take care of their belongings before expecting them to do so on their own. Help your child by reminding them to put their things the proper places and assisting them in putting things away.

Tell your child when they need to take care of things like hanging up their coat, feeding the dog, or putting their clothes away. Make sure that your child can reach the places where their belongings are stored. Establish a certain time each day for your child to take care of their belongings. Let your child know that their things may be taken away for a period if they are not put in their proper place when done being used.

Make a list of frequently used items and have your child put these items in a designated place each day. Have your child place a star or check mark beside each item when it is put away properly. Allow your child to trade in the marks for various rewards.